LARGE SCALE SECURITY FORCE ASSISTANCE: A MEASURED APPROACH

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The role of advising foreign security forces, now known doctrinally as Security Force Assistance (SFA), is increasingly executed by U.S. Army general purpose forces. The scale of assistance required in the Afghanistan and Iraq theaters of operation caused this shift for SFA conduct from Special Operations Forces (SOF). The methodology for the selection and fielding of conventional forces to execute this nonstandard requirement has been challenging. The Army has vacillated from fielding ad hoc teams to the creation of specialized training intended to prepare existing maneuver units for its conduct. Furthermore, there appears to be no approved plan for incorporation of a permanent capability within the Army for the execution of future SFA missions of a similar scale should the need arise. This manuscript analyzes various options for preparing for future large scale SFA by conventional forces and proposes a practical solution for adoption by the U.S. Army.

LARGE SCALE SECURITY FORCE ASSISTANCE: A MEASURED APPROACH

> The United States is unlikely to repeat another Iraq or Afghanistan—that is, forced regime change followed by nation building under fire—anytime soon. But that does not mean it may not face similar challenges in a variety of locales. Where possible, US strategy is to employ indirect approaches—primarily through building the capacity of partner governments and their security forces—to prevent festering problems from turning into crises that require costly and controversial direct military intervention. In this kind of effort, the capabilities of the United States' allies and partners may be as important as its own, and building their capacity is arguably as important as, if not more so than, the fighting the United States does itself.

> —Robert Gates[1]

Although the likelihood of executing security force assistance (SFA) on the scale of current operations in Iraq and Afghanistan appears remote in the future, the United States Army must still prepare for this potential mission. Formal acknowledgement of SFA as an enduring mission requirement for general purpose forces and development of a plan for its inclusion within the Army organizational structure is the first step in the process. Despite the Secretary of Defense's identification of these tasks as essential to future success, the Army appears reluctant to adopt significant changes that ensure it has the long-term capability to execute SFA missions.

A paradox currently exists between Army doctrine and actions taken to refine its organizational structures for SFA requirements. The Army and Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual (FM 3-24) states that while foreign internal defense (FID) has traditionally been "the primary responsibility of the special operations forces (SOF), training foreign security forces is now a core competency of regular and reserve units of all Services".[2] The Commanding General of the U.S. Army's Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), General Martin Dempsey, states in the foreword to the

Army's SFA Field manual (FM 3-07.1) that "security force assistance is no longer an "additional duty"…it is now a core competency for our Army."[3] Finally, the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) acknowledges the requirement for general purpose forces to engage in SFA efforts and establishes an initiative to "strengthen and institutionalize general purpose force capabilities for security force assistance".[4] Although the QDR addresses the need for specialized training and preparation for these forces, the Army seems hesitant to adopt a formal organizational strategy that acknowledges SFA training and preparation as an enduring requirement. Instead, most of the Army's actions to fulfill the SFA requirements, particularly advisor teams, have been provisional in nature. These actions range from the initial hasty formation of advisor support teams to the more recent deployment of Advise and Assist Brigades.

Defense experts such as Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) John Nagl and Dr. Andrew Krepinevich have recommended more permanent solutions to this issue. Some proposals appear impractical, such as Nagl's call for a 20,000 plus soldier "Army Advisory Command."[5] Krepinevich also proposes what would likely be a large standing formation in the form of "something equivalent to an "Advisor Corps"—a cadre of officers and NCOs that can train indigenous and allied forces in peacetime while serving with newly trained indigenous force units in wartime".[6] Regardless of current requirements for conventional forces to execute SFA missions, once current conflicts are complete general purpose forces are unlikely to maintain focus on SFA. The reasoning for this shift is straightforward: advising foreign forces it is not considered a traditional mission for the Army's conventional formations.

The most compelling evidence for this argument is the lack of an Army plan for adjustment or modification of brigade combat team (BCT) tables of organization and equipment (TO&E) to account for the future inclusion of advisor teams. Doctrine alone does not equal a successful strategy to fulfill current and anticipated mission requirements. Such analysis also warrants a full evaluation of the brigade's organizational structure. The Army appears satisfied with executing focused training only for units called upon for SFA duty. This action may be deliberate since "the composition of advisor teams is subject to objectives and conditions."[7] An alternate approach would be to stand up a permanent advisor organization, such as the 'Advisor Command' called for by Nagl, or to develop some sort of organic capability within brigades. This organic capability could range from a less formal process of authorizing each unit to include specially trained and educated personnel recognized through an additional skill identifier (ASI) to the more formal creation of a combat advisor functional area. Should the Army fail to adopt a plan for maintaining proficiency in this area, it will again find itself being reactive when SFA mission requirements reappear in the future.

This manuscript will offer a solution for the Army that addresses anticipated requirements for large scale SFA operations in the 21st Century. It will address the probable future operating environment for Army forces that indicate a requirement to implement an enduring capability for large scale SFA. It will also consider the current policy that drives SFA missions as well as look at historic cases of large scale SFA and the various lessons learned to include the organization and solutions previously used by the Army for SFA conduct. Additionally, it will analyze the more recent overseas contingency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan and the methods used to incorporate

SFA into those combat theaters. Finally, it will consider several options available to the

Army for incorporating an enduring SFA capability and will present a recommended

solution.

<u>The Strategic and Operational Environment</u>

> For the foreseeable future, this environment will be defined by a global struggle against a violent extremist ideology that seeks to overturn the international state system. Beyond this transnational struggle, we face other threats, including a variety of irregular challenges, the quest by rogue states for nuclear weapons, and the rising military power of other states. These are long-term challenges. Success in dealing with them will require the orchestration of national and international power over years or decades to come.[8]

There are changes within the strategic environment that will require the Army to

implement an enduring large scale SFA capability. The June 2008 National Defense

Strategy states that, "Over the next quarter century, U.S. military forces will be

continually engaged in some dynamic combination of combat, security, engagement,

and relief and reconstruction."[9] The increased post cold war prevalence of weak and

failing states, unconventional power, and the spread of radical ideologies will continue

to plague our national interests and influence our national security and defense

strategies for years to come.[10] Non-state and trans-state actors will continue to take

advantage of weak and failing states for their use in projecting radical ideologies and

ideals inconsistent with our nation's values. They will continue to operate from safe

havens or "ungoverned areas" with relative impunity unless challenged by US initiatives.

Since "under the current international system, the host state is the entity responsible for

controlling and governing its territory in a way that prevents its use as a safe haven for

transnational illicit actors", a U.S. policy of engagement with regard to strengthening

host nation security forces seems appropriate.[11]

Likewise, the increased use of irregular warfare by threat forces will challenge our nation and military. In his report on ungoverned areas, Robert Lamb proposes that "Adaptive adversaries such as terrorists, insurgents, and criminal networks as well as states will increasingly resort to irregular forms of warfare as effective ways to challenge conventional military powers."[12] To counter such threats, the U.S. must be prepared to conduct counterterrorism (CT), unconventional warfare (UW), foreign internal defense (FID), counterinsurgency (COIN), and stability operations (SO).[13] As stated by Secretary of Defense Gates, "In the decades to come, the most lethal threats to the United States' safety and security…are likely to emanate from states that cannot adequately govern themselves or secure their own territory. Dealing with such fractured or failing states is, in many ways, the main security challenge of our time".[14] The fundamental truth emanating from these predictions of continued world volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA) is that the U.S. Army must prepare for operations along the entire spectrum of conflict.

A Look at Policy

> The United States and the international community cannot shy away from the difficult task of pursuing stabilization in conflict and post-conflict environments. In countries like Iraq and Afghanistan, building the capacity necessary for security, economic growth, and good governance is the only path to long-term peace and security.[15]

The 2010 U.S. National Security Strategy (NSS) places a great deal of emphasis on capacity building. The execution of SFA is a key element of that strategy. The Army defines SFA as those actions taken to "generate, employ, and sustain local, host-nation, or regional security forces in support of a legitimate authority".[16] Elected officials, most notably the President of the United States, determine what constitutes a "legitimate authority" and assign SFA missions to the armed forces for execution. The United

States often directs these types of missions as part of a larger nation-building operation. With the end of the Cold War, it became possible to secure broad international support for efforts to end festering conflicts and impose enduring peace. Nation-building, after a 40-year hiatus, came back into vogue. The UN embarked on a number of such missions in the 1990's, with the United States leading four: Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo. The first began under President George H. W. Bush; the next three were conducted under President William Jefferson Clinton's administration.[17]

United States policy for the conduct of nation building, and subsequently SFA, has been cyclical in the years since the end of the cold war. President George H.W. Bush was reticent to involve our military forces too deeply in the internal affairs of other nations. While his administration had no standing policy regarding these types of operations, he approved the Somalia operation in the early 1990's. His successor, President Clinton, was much more willing to undertake these types of operations over the course of his eight years as Commander-in-Chief. His opponents often criticized him for the use of troops to conduct nation-building activities.[18]

President George W. Bush initially appeared to be on a course similar to that of his father's administration with regard to nation building and SFA. During a debate with Vice President Al Gore in October 2000, he stated:

> "It started off as a humanitarian mission then changed into a nation-building mission and that's where the mission went wrong. The mission was changed. And as a result, our nation paid a price, and so I don't think our troops ought to be used for what's called nation building. I think our troops ought to be used to fight and win war. I think our troops ought to be used to help overthrow a dictator when it's in our best interests. But in this case, it was a nation-building exercise. And same with Haiti. I wouldn't have supported either."[19]

While his words proved prophetic with regard to the overthrow of a dictator in Iraq, the price for that operation and our undertakings in Afghanistan was large scale SFA in order to promote the stability of those countries and ensure the protection of our national interests.

While the United States provided a majority of the means applied towards the execution of SFA in Iraq and Afghanistan, to claim that it has undertaken these operations unilaterally is erroneous. The initial coalition of countries has decreased significantly since the onset of operations in these countries; however, the United States still enjoys the support of some allies within the SFA effort to include the United Kingdom. Based on its size and capabilities, the United States' military is uniquely capable of providing a large portion of the means for the conduct of SFA.

The current administration's policy for nation building and SFA is similar to that of the three previous administrations. While President Obama's administration acknowledges the need for US involvement in areas where our vital interests are at stake within its National Security Strategy, it seems hesitant to commit national resources towards the conduct of long-term efforts. In response to the military's proposal for increased forces in the Afghanistan Theater of operations, President Obama stated, "I'm not doing 10 years. I'm not doing a long-term nation-building effort."[20] Despite this statement, it is still probable that the U.S. Army will be responsible for SFA type operations now and in the foreseeable future. The scale of future SFA operations is the key question: Will the U.S. again enter into large scale SFA efforts requiring the commitment of general purpose forces or will the efforts be on a scale small enough to only require SOF participation? Department of Defense (DoD) policy

clearly states that it "shall develop and maintain the capability within DoD general purpose forces" to conduct SFA activities.[21]

The overall objective for an SFA operation, whether as part of nation building or preservation, is the stabilization of a state through the strengthening of its security forces. This objective must also be the principal consideration in the establishment of a national policy covering the appropriate use of SFA. This stabilization goal must seek to account for both internal and external threats in order to achieve long-term security. It would be unwise to provide SFA to a state whose continued survival within the region is untenable. Once the United States withdraws its active SFA support, either through policy change or following the successful completion of stated objectives, that state must have the ability to stand on its own within its region of the world. That ability depends largely on whether the other regional actors perceive the leadership of that state as being a "legitimate authority".[22] This perception by other regional actors depends on variables too numerous to address within the confines of this paper; however, one potentially significant factor is the method, whether unilaterally or as part of a larger coalition, used by the United States to provide SFA.

Historical Examples of SFA and Lessons Learned

> Security force assistance (SFA) is not new for Army forces. In fact, General George Washington's Inspector General of the Army acted as an advisor for Army forces. Baron Friedrick Wilhelm von Steuben instilled discipline and professionalism into an army that previously lacked formalized training. His 1779 Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States, adapted from the Prussian army, formed the doctrinal backbone of the Continental Army throughout the Revolutionary War. Additionally, the lineage of the Army's operations field manual, FM 3-0, can be traced to this document. As a benefactor of advisors such as von Steuben, the Army has since undertaken what is called SFA several times throughout its history.[23]

As this passage from the *Security Force Assistance* Field Manual indicates, the U.S. Army has been involved in SFA activities since its inception. This paper will address two of the better known instances requiring significant levels of general purpose forces: the Korean and Vietnam conflicts. The U.S. Army's foray into large scale SFA began on July 1, 1949 with the establishment of the 500 member U.S. Military Advisory Group to the Republic of Korea (KMAG) as a replacement to the much smaller U.S. Provisional Military Advisory Group (PMAG).[24] KMAG's initial focus was to assist the Republic of Korea (ROK) in "developing its army, coast guard, and national police by advising, assisting, and ensuring U.S. military assistance was used effectively".[25]

Selection of personnel to serve in this undesirable assignment was challenging. Former members of PMAG set about screening eligible candidates. "The board experienced little difficulty in obtaining enlisted personnel; these were recruited as volunteers and had only to hold certain MOS's and be recommended by their officers for assignment to the group. Obtaining officers proved to be a difficult task. Except for a few volunteers, they had to be levied for duty as advisors."[26] This problem was further compounded with the onset of the Korean War and subsequent necessity to expand KMAG. The eventual ceiling for KMAG personnel reached 2,866 in 1953.[27] A significant portion of these were temporary duty or attached, as KMAG was only authorized a maximum of 1,918 personnel.[28] This lack of significant personnel structure resulted in an inability for KMAG to establish coverage below the regimental level.

Training and qualification of personnel for responsibilities associated with advising foreign forces went unanswered. "No attempt was made to qualify personnel

to provide appropriate advice to counterparts who outranked them by two or three grades. Often, advisors were junior company and field grade officers—willing and eager to do the job, but professionally weak." [29] New KMAG advisors were provided with nothing more than a short orientation briefing, a visit with KMAG staff, and an advisor handbook and procedure guide for self study.[30] No provisions were made for introducing the advisor to Korean culture or language. The Army and KMAG "tended to expect the Koreans to understand and adapt to the Americans rather than to focus on what an advisor needed to know to work effectively with his counterpart".[31] The language issue was a critical shortcoming. KMAG initially attempted to establish a language course for advisors but ended the initiative due to "lack of sufficient interest". [32] There was even a suggestion to make English the universal language for use by the U.S. and ROK security forces. This suggestion was not incorporated due to a lack of available time and qualified instructors.[33]

A special study was commissioned in 1953 to explore the U.S. Army advisory effort in Korea. Not surprisingly, the recommendations from this study, entitled *The KMAG Advisor: Role and Problems of the Military Advisor in Developing and Indigenous Army for Combat Operations in Korea,* focused on the critical areas of advisor selection, importance of language training and use of interpreters, and advisory preparatory training. Few of the recommendations contained within the study were ever adopted. [34] The KMAG advisors had performed their duty of making the ROK security forces more capable in spite of the language and cultural barriers and ad hoc selection manner for KMAG personnel. Once a cease fire was in place, the advisory role took a back seat to more rewarding positions of service. As later noted by the Commander of U.S. Forces

Korea (USFK), Lieutenant General Matthew Ridgeway, "officers in an advisory capacity, unit advisors…really had a much tougher job than fellows in the regular units, a much tougher job".[35] Such acknowledgements would assumedly result in an enduring plan for fulfilling similar SFA requirements in future conflicts. However, as evidenced in the next example, the U.S. Army ignored the lessons learned from KMAG and repeated several of the same mistakes.

The Vietnam conflict saw the largest advisory effort in the U.S. Army's history. Originally initiated as a program to assist French forces with their fight in Indochina in the early 1950's, the "Military Advisory and Assistance Group, Indochina became the Military Advisory Assistance Group, Vietnam (MAAG-V) in 1955".[36] MAAG-V began with 692 assigned personnel undertaking the task of organizing, training, and advising the armed forces of the Republic of Vietnam and transforming them into a competent fighting force.[37] With the advisory role expanding beyond combat units, the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV) was formed in 1962. MACV eventually evolved into an operational headquarters responsible for the oversight of all operations within Vietnam. Under MACV, the combat unit advisor strength reached a pinnacle of nearly 3,000 personnel by 1970. This personnel number is in addition to the other types of advisory efforts including SOF Mobile Advisory Teams (MAT) and Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) personnel. In total, MACV oversaw a field advisory strength of over 14,000 personnel.[38]

Unfortunately, selection for advisory duty in Vietnam was not dissimilar to the Army's efforts during the Korean conflict. There were no specific criteria for selection to become an advisor with the exception of targeted rank, combat military occupational

specialty (MOS) and overseas tour vulnerability.[39] Early selectees received no focused

training prior to deployment and only a brief orientation to the command and theater of

operations upon their arrival in Vietnam. As the war progressed, the roles and

responsibilities of the combat advisors evolved from training to tactical advice to combat

support. Advisor duties increased to include "coordinating both artillery and helicopter

and fixed-wing air support; acting as a conduit for intelligence; developing supply and

support programs; improving communications between combat units and area

commands (province and districts); and providing special assistance in such areas as

psychological warfare, civic action, and medical aid".[40] To meet these evolving roles of

combat advisors in Vietnam, the Army finally created the Military Assistance Training

Advisory (MATA) course. The program of instruction (POI) for MATA evolved over time

to reflect the ever changing environment faced by combat advisors in Vietnam. Major

blocks of instruction included area studies, counterinsurgency, weapons, language, and

demolitions.[41] Despite the efforts to adequately prepare its combat advisors for their

mission, the U.S. Army still fell woefully short of success as outlined in several studies

conducted both during and after the Vietnam War.[42]

The Army's Approach Towards SFA During Current Overseas Contingency Operations

> The Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) have made significant
> advances during the last few years, but their development had low to
> moderate priority for nearly half a decade. It was not until 2006-2007 that
> the ANSF began to have meaningful force goals, and to have adequate
> NATO/ISAF and US aid in developing its "force quantity." An effective
> ANSF is only one of the elements of any meaningful kind of victory, but it
> is a critical one.[43]

As the U.S. Army entered into combat in the countries of Afghanistan and Iraq, it

was ill prepared to conduct large scale SFA operations. The SFA mission within

Afghanistan began small, but as the importance of properly trained host nation security

forces became apparent in the face of a budding insurgency, the requirement for competent advisors grew significantly. The Office of Military Cooperation – Afghanistan (OMC-A), later to become the Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan (CSTC- A), initially relied on the 1st Battalion, 3rd Special Forces Group (1/3 SFG) to train the Afghanistan National Army (ANA).[44] It soon became clear that any hope for stability in Afghanistan relied upon the fielding of a viable host nation security force. The scale of this undertaking was more than could be fulfilled by SOF units alone and the effort to train the ANA transitioned from the 1/3 SFG to Coalition Joint Task Force (CJTF) Phoenix. CJTF Phoenix focused solely on training and advising the ANA and was comprised primarily of U.S. Army general purpose forces, augmented by individuals and units from other U.S. services and the Coalition nations.[45] Initial team selection came about on an ad hoc basis and the quality of training received varied widely. Combat advisors did not experience a viable training program until the Army initiated a more formal transition team training program at Ft. Riley, KS under the command and control of the 1st Brigade, 1st Infantry Division.[46]

> US and Coalition leaders believed that Iraq's security forces would need to be reshaped after Saddam was overthrown. For a democratic Iraq to develop, Iraq's military and security forces had to be reformed into a professional military force under civilian control instead of being used as an instrument of repression…the Coalition, overall, did not have a detailed, well-coordinated plan for the reconstruction of the ISF when the regime fell in April 2003.[47]

The SFA mission in Iraq faced issues similar to those experienced in Afghanistan. The Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), the agency responsible for the creation of new Iraqi Security Forces (ISF), envisioned no role for the Iraqi Army in internal security. As an insurgency developed in mid 2003, U.S. Army units began efforts to man and employ their own local and regional ISF. Training and advising ISF

quickly became "another critical element in the new full spectrum campaign". As there was no formal SFA program in place at this time, all advisors were taken 'out of hide' from combat formations. There were no prescribed criteria for selecting advisors and its conduct was often viewed as an additional duty. As conditions within the country continued to deteriorate and the insurgency strengthened, "the creation of the ISF had arguably become the single most important operation in the Coalition's campaign". [48]

A more formal SFA program was then established through the creation of the Coalition Military Assistance Training Team (CMATT) and the Coalition Police Assistance Training Team (CPATT) between May 2003 and March 2004. SFA efforts for CMATT at this time focused on Phase II of the New Iraqi Army (NIA) program which called for the fielding of 27 battalions and 3 divisions by the beginning of September 2004.[49] Following the transfer of sovereignty to Iraq in the summer of 2004, the Coalition centralized all SFA efforts under the Multi-National Security Transition Command – Iraq (MNSTC-I) thus formally transferring responsibility from the CPA to the military.[50]

The Phase II plan required "a major increase" in U.S. and Coalition support to include mobile training teams and embedded unit advisors.[51] This increase was beyond the capabilities of forces within the theater and required a request for forces (RFF) in the form of advisor support teams (ASTs), later to become known as Military Transition Teams (MiTT), who would embed with the NIA. The bulk of the initial forces deployed in answer to this request were individual volunteers. They were not selected using any specific criteria, nor were they trained properly for the task at hand.[52] Eventually, the United States Army Reserve (USAR) deployed groups of advisors, mostly from the 98th Division (Institutional Training). Training foreign forces was not a "designated mission"

for USAR institutional training divisions; however, they were comprised of cadres of senior personnel and well versed in executing training programs for both Reserve and National Guard (NG) units.[53] As the conduct of training programs for USAR and NG units preparing for deployment was the primary mission assigned to institutional training divisions, their long term use as the primary SFA force providers became impractical.

Both early efforts of providing SFA faced shortcomings similar to those in previous conflicts. Selection criteria were inconsistent and based primarily on MOS and overseas assignment vulnerability. Teams were often broken apart once they arrived in theater due to other operational demands. None of the positions were classified as key and developmental (KD) and the assignments were therefore not seen as being career enhancing. As recently as 2006 the Army continued to struggle with the inclusion of sufficient cultural and language training within its training programs of instruction (POI). As highlighted in a Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL) study, "transition teams require more complete and relevant cultural understanding training" and "the lack of familiarity with basic language skills hinders the effectiveness of Transition Teams by limiting rapport and interaction with Iraqi Army counterparts".[54]

On the positive side, the Army has successfully adapted for the SFA role in recent years. There is now a formal training program under the command and control of the 162nd Infantry Brigade, Foreign Security Forces-Combat Advisor (FSF-CA) at Ft. Polk, LA. The brigade's mission is to conduct "combat advisor training of joint, multi-functional foreign area Advisor Teams and Security Force Assistance Brigades (SFABs) to achieve Theater, Service and Joint training requirements".[55] This unit provides instruction in culture, counterinsurgency (COIN), advisor skills, language, combat skills,

technical/tactical training, and force protection through various methods to include the use of role players from both Afghanistan and Iraq.

Selection for assignment as an advisor is, at present, seen with more prestige. This change came about as a result of a 2008 Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA) memorandum delineating several positions on transition teams as being key and developmental (KD). He further decreed that selection for the Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) "Transition Team Commander" positions come from a centralized selection list (CSL) and be treated with equal prestige as other CSL commands.[56] The Secretary of the Army, John M. McHugh, gave similar guidance to a recent Brigadier General Promotion board when he directed, "given the current operational environment, pay particular attention to officers with service on, or with, Transition Teams… Leaders in these billets can have a strategic impact. These billets have been deemed key and developmental positions and are critical to our long-term success in Iraq and Afghanistan".[57]

The latest initiative with regard to the conduct of SFA is the deployment of the Modular Brigades Augmented for SFA (MB-SFA) which are also known as the Advise and Assist Brigades (AAB). The AAB is a mission set assigned to a BCT that is augmented with enabling assets and capabilities to support distributed SFA. These enablers primarily include Combat Advisors, but may also contain others such as Civil Affairs (CA), Military Police (MP), socio-cultural expert, etc.[58] The AAB concept is still a work in progress with several models currently in use. The current average number of augmentation personnel assigned to the AAB is approximately 48 combat advisors. Other than the CSL selected LTC Transition Team Commanders, all other advisors are assigned to their positions by their assignments' managers. While personnel with

previous experiences in SFA may be filling some of these positions, there is no formal program to ensure that an adequate group of properly trained and educated combat advisor personnel remains available in the future.

Courses of Action for Consideration

The easiest course of action for the SFA issue is to not change anything. The status quo approach is feasible since the current process of augmenting modular BCTs seems to be working. Some minor adjustments are required, such as instituting a method by which to comply with Department of Defense (DoD) guidance to, "Identify and track individuals who have completed SFA-related training, education, or experience in the Defense Readiness Reporting System with a relevant skill-designator indicating their SFA qualifications". [59] Assuming that this would also result in the coding of specific positions within the modular BCTs as requiring this ASI, the expertise would reside here as long as personnel with SFA experience are available within the system. However, this does not account for incorporating an enduring capability within the unit. There are no requirements to participate in sustainment training or continuing education to maintain ASI currency. It is possible to assign a former SFA Soldier to a BCT whose last experience in that type of mission is significantly outdated.

A second potential solution is to grow Army SOF forces to account for all future SFA missions. This is an infeasible solution for several reasons. There is a lack of available candidates to achieve growth significant enough to fulfill all future needs. While SOF is expected to increase in size over the next several years, their criteria for selecting appropriate personnel must not be compromised. According to Lieutenant General John Mulholland, commanding general of U.S. Army Special Operations Command, "We will never build enough capacity within the force to meet the demand

for the skills and disciplines we bring".[60] In addition to limited candidate availability, it is also too expensive to train enough SOF to fulfill all requirements. Provided a candidate is selected for SOF training following participation in the three week Special Forces Selection and Assessment Course (SFAS), they are still required to attend the Special Forces Qualification Course (SFQC) which can last for up to 55 weeks depending on the chosen MOS. This time requirement, in addition to up to 64 weeks for language training, makes the creation of a qualified SOF Soldier both a time consuming and resource prohibitive endeavor.

Another course of action to consider is the creation of specially designed formations such as the Advisor Command recommended by John Nagl. The major concern with proposals to establish a separate or "special" organization within the standing force for the conduct of SFA is that of resources. As mentioned earlier, Nagl's proposed Advisor Command calls for "a standing force of some 20,000 soldiers".[61] This solution could fulfill a requirement for an enduring large scale SFA capability within the Army, but would come at a high cost. The likely bill payer for this initiative would be the exchange of at least four brigade combat teams worth of personnel in order to fill the billets within the command. These could be a combination of active and reserve component formations, but their loss would place stress upon the Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) model and reduce dwell time for combat formations. As the current Army Vice Chief of Staff, General Chiarelli, stated in an article shortly following his return from Iraq, "we simply don't have the resources to divide the military into "combat" and "stability" organizations. Instead, we must focus on developing full-spectrum capabilities across all organizations in the armed forces".[62]

Proposed Solution

> Helping to build competent and accountable indigenous security forces is likely to be a pillar of US national strategy going forward…The scale and scope of SFA in current operations demand not only advisors, but also the combat and support capabilities that are part and parcel of brigade combat teams that are the centerpiece of the modular force. The conditions for any future SFA effort of similar scope and scale will likely require a force that is capable of fighting alongside indigenous forces as well. Therefore, forces specifically designed for advisory missions would be unprepared to operate effectively in contested areas.[63]

As acknowledged in this executive summary passage from Unified Quest 2009, the brigade combat team is recognized as the cornerstone of the modern U.S. Army. As such, it should serve as the basis for any proposal for an enduring SFA capability within our general purpose forces. The Army cannot afford to dedicate resources towards the development of general purpose force units whose sole function is SFA. In order to ensure an enduring capability within existing formations, the Army should implement a combat advisor functional area (FA). This FA should be comprised of both officer and enlisted personnel who would form combat advisor teams (CAT). By establishing this FA, the Army would validate the importance of the SFA mission to future operations while at the same time reinforcing stability as a full-spectrum requirement for its combat forces. Initially, the Army should incorporate these teams into the brigade combat team TO&E to allow for an enduring SFA capability within our principal fighting formations. Serious consideration must also be made towards team inclusion in each division level organization.

The minimum number of combat advisors recommended for each CAT is twenty personnel. This proposed number is based on the recent practices of fielding 16 and 10 man brigade level teams within the countries of Afghanistan and Iraq respectively. Studies have indicated the current teams are inadequately manned for the tasks

assigned and therefore require either additional personnel or augmentation. [64] Twenty

personnel assigned to each CAT should allow for ample advisory coverage, particularly

along the lines of traditional staff functions (see Figure 1). Under certain conditions,

such as combat operations, the CAT will require augmentation from its parent

organization. This would most likely come in the form of increased security forces such

as personal security detachments (PSD), as well as increased command and control

capabilities to man the CAT operations center. All personnel serving within a CAT

would fulfill their FA utilization requirements. Therefore, each position within a CAT is

considered key and developmental with respect to professional development.

Additionally, it is recommended that the position of team commander at both the division

and brigade levels be filled as a result of selection by an Army command board. This

will further ensure only the 'best qualified' are selected for this important position while

at the same time making the conversion into this FA more attractive for potential

candidates.

Example Combat Advisor Team (CAT) Organization	
Position Title	*Rank*
Team Commander	COL or LTC*
Executive Officer	LTC or MAJ*
Command Sergeant Major	CSM
Personnel Trainer (S1)	MAJ
Intelligence Trainer (S2)	MAJ
Operations Trainer (S3)	MAJ
Logistics Trainer (S4)	MAJ
Civil Affairs Trainer (S5)	MAJ
Assistant Personnel Trainer (A/S1)	CPT
Assistant Intelligence Trainer (A/S2)	CPT
Assistant Operations Trainer (A/S3)	CPT
Assistant Logistics Trainer (A/S4)	CPT
Maintenance Technician/Trainer	CW3
Personnel (S1) NCO	SFC
Intelligence (S2) NCO	SFC
Operations (S3) NCO	SFC
Logistics (S4) NCO	SFC
Maintenance NCO	SFC
Team Medic	SFC/SSG
Team Communications Chief	SFC/SSG
*Rank of Commander and Executive Officer dependant on level assigned (Division or Brigade)	

Figure 1: Example Division Combat Advisor Team (CAT) Organization

If each of the Army's 18 divisions (10 Active Component (AC) and 8 Reserve Component (RC)) and 73 planned brigade combat teams (45 AC and 28 RC) are authorized a CAT, the total personnel requirement is approximately 1,820.[65] The bill payer for this increase in capability could come from either reducing the number of brigade combat teams by one or through the reduction of a modular support unit such as a battlefield surveillance brigade. This reduction could come from either the AC or RC component or a combination thereof. The most likely solution is the combination approach as there will be a requirement for CATs within both AC and RC formations. With the current conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan requiring less dedicated combat units, this reduction in formation type should not result in significant stress to the ARFORGEN cycle. Furthermore, the advantage wrought by creating this capability with the division and brigade combat teams is potentially immense. Deploying units with an organic capability to conduct SFA will result in a higher degree of teamwork and increased understanding and focus on the commander's overall strategy and intent. Unlike the ad hoc nature by which previous teams have linked up with their supported units, these organizations will have the opportunity to develop strong relationships through all facets of training and preparation for deployment.

Designated personnel within the combat advisor FA should be regionally focused and receive requisite language and cultural education and training. The Army has realized through the course of recent experiences that "full spectrum operations require adaptable foreign language and cultural capabilities to be fully successful".[66] This is also in keeping with the Army's vision as to how it will conduct future operations. It is anticipated that the Army will continue to provide "combatant commands with regionally

aligned and specially trained forces with competence in the languages, cultures, history, governments, security forces, and threats in areas where conflict is likely".[67] Currently these forces consist mostly of SOF. However, should the Army choose to adopt a broader scope for regionally aligned forces, such as inclusion of brigade combat teams, then the combat advisors assigned to those units would prove an excellent source of knowledge and experience. Regionally focused training and education would also position combat advisor FA personnel as highly desirable candidates for positions on higher level staffs such as corps or even the combatant commands. Such billets would be ideal professional development assignments for officers following their CAT commands. Additionally, the preservation of the 162nd BDE (FSF-CA) as the training base for these teams is imperative. While this requires the dedication of an additional 825 personnel, its continued existence ensures not only the continuation of validated programs of instruction (POI) for current and future use, but also serves as another professional development opportunity for experienced combat advisors.[68] If approved, the new combat advisor FA would serve as the basis from which the cadre assigned to the 162nd BDE is selected.

The most logical proponent for the newly formed combat advisor FA is the U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC). This dovetails nicely with the designated proponent for SFA at the Department of Defense level, which is the U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM).[69] USASOC is already well versed with the development of training and doctrine for SFA as these types of missions have traditionally been under the direction of SOF. They are also best suited to address the various other requirements necessary for the CAT proficiency such as necessary

equipment advisory techniques. The shared experiences and lessons learned between SOF and CAT members should result in a higher level of competence for future SFA endeavors regardless of scale.

The primary danger in the selection of USASOC as the combat advisor FA proponent is the potential loss of some authority by the Maneuver Center of Excellence (MCoE). The MCoE is currently the proponent for all three types of brigade combat teams (Infantry, Stryker, and Heavy) and would understandably be hesitant to relinquish any oversight it enjoys with regard to these formations. A compromise solution of shared proponency between USASOC and the MCoE would allow both entities to contribute to the development of the necessary doctrine, organization, training, and other requirements for the CATs within the brigade combat teams.

Conclusion

The Army must endeavor to continually learn from its mistakes. The lessons learned and ignored from the Korean and Vietnam advisor missions must not be repeated in future operations. The Army has adapted to the ever changing environments of the modern battlefield with amazing swiftness. These course corrections included such undertakings as the development and fielding of new doctrines to the adaptation and training of general purpose forces for the execution of SFA. The probability that general purpose forces will continue to be called upon to execute SFA operations in the predictable future is quite high. In order to meet this anticipated requirement for combat advisors, the U.S. Army should incorporate SFA as an enduring capability within its maneuver formations. The creation of a combat advisor FA and subsequent fielding of CATs to every division and brigade combat team is a reasonable step towards the achievement of this end.

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